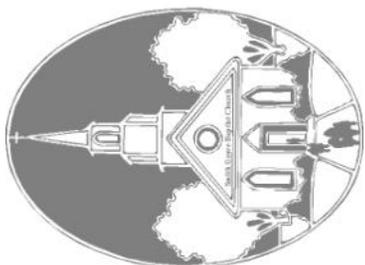


Must have  
First Class  
Stamp



[www.smithgrove.org](http://www.smithgrove.org)

**VOLUME 43**  
**February 2026**  
**ISSUE 503**

**PROVERBS 25:13**

As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him, for he refresheth the soul of his masters . . .

**THE MESSENGER**

Smith Grove Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 57  
Colfax, NC 27235

Sunday School	10:00 AM
Morning Worship	11:00 AM
Children's Church	11:15 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Service	7:00 PM
Bible Clubs	7:00 PM
Thursday Visitation	7:00 PM

~ **NURSERY PROVIDED** ~  
2707 Sandy Ridge Road  
Colfax, NC 27235

**Rev. Bruce Freeman, Pastor**  
Home (336) 996-1501  
Cell (336) 816-2473

# The Messenger



## February 2026



**Smith Grove Baptist Church**  
2707 Sandy Ridge Road ~ Colfax, NC 27235  
[www.smithgrove.org](http://www.smithgrove.org)

**Rev. Bruce Freeman, Pastor**  
H (336) 996-1501 C (336) 816-2473



Sunday School	10:00 AM
Morning Worship	11:00 AM
Children's Church	11:15 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Service	7:00 PM
Bible Clubs	6:45-8:15 PM

**Streaming Live:** Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/mySGBC/>  
YouTube  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi39\\_zpMzkkCXdFYy1NKndQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi39_zpMzkkCXdFYy1NKndQ)

**PROVERBS 25:13** *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him, for he refresheth the soul of his masters . . .*

*Let all that you do  
be done in Love*



**Sat., Feb. 7, 6 pm - W-S Rescue Mission**  
**Sun., Feb. 8, 11 am & 6 pm ~ Guest Speaker: Pastor Gary Blalock,**  
Shining Light Baptist Church  
**Sun., Feb. 15, 6 pm ~ BEAMS Sunday**  
**Robinwood Retirement Ctr.** ~ Beginning Feb. 3 ~  
Every Tuesday at 6:00 pm.

1 Corinthians 16:14 *"Let all your things be done with charity."* [Love] KJV

**Statement of Faith:** We are an Independent Baptist Church (established in 1921) that still preaches the old time Gospel, and we believe that the King James Version of the Bible constitutes the preserved, inerrant, and inspired Word of God for the English speaking people of the earth.

# REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**SHUT-INS:** Betty Byrd Iris Farrington

## IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

**PVT Adam Brittain**, Army, Texas (Sam Crater's nephew)

**CW4 Jonathan Harless** (Ft. Bragg) } (Hal & Martha  
**COL Robert Harless** (Savannah, GA) } Harless' sons)

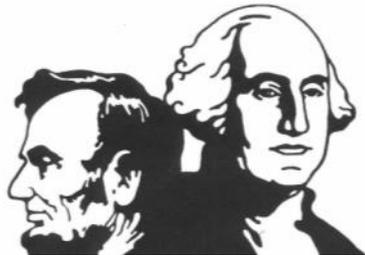
**E5 Noah Johnson**, US Coast Guard, Portsmouth, VA  
(Henry & Geraldine Johnson's grandson)

**SSgt Trevor Westmoreland**, Army, Fort Benning, GA  
(Allen & Sandy Westmoreland's son)

**1stSgt Gregory Reynolds**, Marines, Camp Pendleton, CA.  
(Jan Reynolds' son.)

**SSgt. Josh Robertson**, Marines, Naples, Italy (From Clyde Gray)

**Gregory Turner**, National Guard, Kuwait (late January) (son of a CVS  
pharmacist in Kernersville)



## Presidents' Day

is a U.S. federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February, officially known as Washington's Birthday, but popularly seen as a day to honor all U.S. presidents, especially George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, whose birthdays are in February. The holiday's date was moved from Washington's actual Feb. 22 birthday by the Uni-

form Monday Holiday Act of 1971 to create three-day weekends, though many states still observe it to celebrate Lincoln and other leaders, too. This year, February 16 is Presidents' Day.

## Groundhog, Groundhog, what do you seek?

As out of your hole you quietly peek.  
If the day be fair, your shadow will be  
Cast on the ground for all to see,  
And back to your lair you'll quickly creep,  
For six long weeks, again you'll sleep.  
But if we're lucky, the sky will be gray,  
Then all of us will dance and sing,  
'Cause just around the corner, here comes Spring!



## BEAMS' Report for January 2026

# of Pledges: 7; # of Contributions: 4;  
Total Contributors: 11  
Total Contributed: \$ 444.00 =  
55 Bibles in January (plus some postage)

*Many thanks to all those who gave monies to the BEAMS' ministry  
specifically for postage which added \$ 100.00 in January!*

You can also get the BEAMS' report online at our website:  
<https://www.smithgrove.org/beams-report/>

*Pastor Chuck:*

"A lapse of faith will lead to fear."

"The still small voice of God is the whisper of silence to the heart."

*Pastor Bruce:*

"A pivotal point in life is to surrender all to Christ."

"Fear is the greatest enemy of joy."

"If we don't have Jesus, in reality, our life is in vain."

"Let God take control; He knows our 'weight limit.'"

*Tim Easley:* "Wisdom = God's point of view."

*Quotes*

Services will be streaming Live every Wednesday at 7 p.m. & Sunday  
at 11 a.m. & 6 p.m. on [Facebook](#) & [YouTube](#) — (You do not need a



facebook account to watch the video on fb!)

<https://www.facebook.com/mySGBC/>



[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj39\\_zpMzkkCXdFYv1NKndQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj39_zpMzkkCXdFYv1NKndQ)

To listen & download mp3:

Audio Archive Online ~ <https://www.smithgrove.org/audio-archive/>

## The Road to Everlasting Life

**Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

**Romans 5:12** "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

**Romans 5:8** "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

**Romans 6:23** "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

**Romans 10:9-10** "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

**Romans 10:13** "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."



**Smith Grove's ministry to our widows, widowers, & senior singles**  
*"Honour widows that are widows indeed."*  
*(1 Timothy 5:3)*

This is a continuing churchwide ministry to remember *widows, widowers, and senior singles* of the church in a meaningful way. Join us as we highlight our special "Honour Roll Gang Members" who are having birthdays in February (none in March). Please take a moment to send a card, make a telephone call, or do something extra special for our special saints.

**Jean Rumsey**  
 8730 Bame Road  
 Colfax, NC 27235  
 336-668-2080 ~ February 01



### Honor Jesus

Honor Jesus with all your heart;  
 Never from our Lord depart.  
 Then you'll know the virtuous way  
 To a happy Christian Valentine's Day.

By Joanna Fuchs



### February Anniversaries

8 Gary & Denice Slate  
 14 Steve & Cheryl Holt



Ephesians 5:25, 28: *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."*

Ephesians Chapter 5:31 *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

*~ Thoughts for the New Year (Part 2) ~*  
**Where is Your Help in Time of Trouble?**  
 (Excerpt #2 from a lesson by Brother Calvin Vaughn)

### What happens when you are faced with a Life Changing Storm, problem or simply a Closed Door?

**Can we learn from others and look at their frightening experiences?**  
 Life's storms that we see in the Scriptures seem to be worse on the ocean than on land! Christ's disciples found this to be true! Keep in mind, **God's Word** teaches followers **to seek HiS help during such stressful and turbulent times!** **Psalm 107:23-32** They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. *For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.* They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. *He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.* Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

In **verse 25**, we see that the LORD **caused the storm** but then in **Verse 29 HE calmed** the storm! He can do the same for us today! How do you react in a storm? Do you fall apart in fear thinking he has forsaken you or do you seek HiM out? We need to recall the words found in **Psalm 29:3 & 4 "The God of glory thunders ... The voice of the Lord is majestic."** "Majestic" is such a wonderful and beautiful word describing our feelings when God reaches down his hand in **answer to our plea** and prayers for HiS Help and Guidance. **Heb 13:5 - Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**

Just as our responses to storms vary according to our **spiritual maturity**, so do **our reactions to trials and tribulations**. Life's storms can either **stunt or accelerate our spiritual growth**. The determining factor is our reaction. Some people *humbly cry out to the Lord*, while **others get angry or frustrated** with Him. Still **others ignore Him** and try to figure things out on their own, seeking solutions in every place except God's Will and HiS Word.

Turning away from the Lord results in a **hardened heart** for an unbeliever, and **discipline for a believer**.

God wants us to be surrendered to His will, because if we are proud or self-reliant, then we aren't useful for His glory. **That's why He brings storms across our path—to teach us to rely on Him**. As difficult as they may be, storms are meant to produce **Godly character in us**. Patience is a virtue we should strive for. We must wait upon the Lord **Isa 40:31 - But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary.**



## Be Strong ~ Youth

As our young people settle back into their school schedules after the busy holiday season, we are wrapping up our study on "Talking With God". In our final lesson, we pondered the important question, **"When do we pray?"**

To set up our exploration, we stretched a round tablecloth on the floor, dividing and labeling it into four equal parts: morning, afternoon, evening, and night. It was easy for them to see that the huge plastic circle represented an entire day. As the youngsters sat on the edge of the plastic, they intently listened to scripture read aloud, then they hurried to the time of day represented in the verse. Six passages had them scrambling from one quarter to another before their opponent could make it there. The scriptures we examined, from both Old and New Testaments, showed people praying anytime of day. This overview led us to question, "Does the Bible say there's one best time to talk to God?"

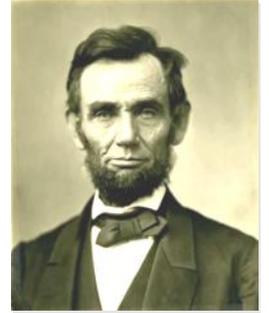
From childhood, many of us learned to pray before meals or right before we fall asleep, but is that enough? Our young people concluded that there should be more to a consistent prayer life. So next, we considered our own favorite times to pray... before tests, during sickness, after a sorrow, or when we're anxious. We rejoice that God doesn't limit us in how many times we can cry out to Him. In fact, He is always ready for us to come before Him in prayer... absolutely wherever and whenever! Our youngsters wondered what might be in the clue basket, and the biggest clue was the shape of the plastic sheet on which we sat. The big circle reminded us of a wall clock, which is precisely what our basket offered up. As the big circle suggests, time is a continuous cycle, starting over each morning, over and over again as the hours pass. At absolutely any moment along that circle, God will hear us when we call out to Him, day or night. What a blessing, helping our youngsters cling to this precious promise early in their lives! Whatever hardships we face... from loneliness in the dark stillness, to pain in the broad daylight... our loving, ever-ready Lord is listening when we pour our hearts out to Him. Could there be any sweeter reminder as we stand on the brink of a fresh and uncertain year? "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off." (Psalm 139:1-2) Because He knows us, may we all step into 2026 refreshed and clinging to Him, resting in His promises, and trusting in His guidance through any trials that come our way. It's our hope that our youngsters have grown in their prayer life, and that they can confidently talk with God at *any hour*, no matter what this new year brings.

Grateful that we can call on Him anytime!

~Bruce, Darla, and Marshall

## Was Abraham Lincoln a Christian?

Today let us consider the question: was our most beloved president, Abraham Lincoln, a born-again Christian? We know that his presidential speeches were peppered with references to God. We also know that there are a lot of stories in circulation about him being very earthy and suggestions that he was a deist at best. So what is the truth? Was he a Christian? Certainly not during the majority of his life, but there is fairly strong evidence that by his final night in Ford's Theater, he had indeed put his faith in Jesus Christ and been born again.

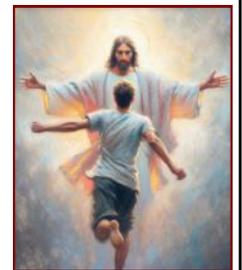


If so, his was not the dramatic conversion we love to celebrate. There was no life-changing vision, no Saul of Tarsus experience. Nor did he come to Christ through hearing any of the many forceful preachers of his day. He had heard plenty of sermons, but sermons alone didn't do the job for him. His experience with Christ was more of a thoughtful, gradual moving toward the Savior through the varied and often tragic events of his life.

The reality is this: it is not so important how you get to the Savior, as long as you get to Him. For some, salvation comes with a bang. There are tears and emotions to spare. But with others, often the more intellectual types, it may be the result of a lengthy process of thought and consideration. But sooner or later, whether with explosive emotion or cool deliberation, *there must be a crossing over from death to life, from condemnation to forgiveness.* This we call being born again and it works the same for presidents and plumbers, for statesmen and middle school teachers. It is not an option. Our Lord Jesus has told us plainly, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Excerpt from an article on <https://spiritofgrace.org/articles/2017/was-abraham-lincoln-born-again/>)

**"When a Christian Dies ~ they trade . . ."** Pastor Bruce Freeman

The Temporal *for the Eternal*  
Death *for Life*  
Faith *for Sight*  
Troubles *for Triumph*  
A home down here *for a mansion in Heaven*  
A body in pain (oftentimes), *for a place*  
*where there will be no pain or dying.*  
Worries *for eternal rest*





We appreciate your continued prayers and support for the Tacna Christian School Project. In the past 2 months, all of the painting projects have been completed as well as various electrical projects. The windows have begun to be installed, and this should be completed sometime close to the beginning of the year. Quite a bit of the construction debris has been cleared, making the property look much nicer.

In the past letter, we discussed the possibility of the school functioning under the license of another Christian school. It seems that this is not going to be possible, but we are advancing with the idea of a daycare or an after-school program where Bible lessons would also be taught. Pastor Henry Sucapuca is meeting with someone at the Department of Education in these days to continue to check on the paperwork needed to begin.

Calvary Baptist Church recently had a Christmas outreach at the school, and many children and parents attended. With God's blessing, there has definitely been a positive response from the people who live near the school property.

A faithful supporting church recently paid for many of the things that were on the list of needs for the school. Other offerings will be directed to wherever the greatest need lies. The current needs are to better the security fence and to hire a night watchman. Thank you to those who have given in these months.

We pray that God gives each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Thank you for your continued support of the Tacna Christian School!

In Christ,  
 Missionary Robert Stover ~ Tacna, Peru



**Note:** Any gifts toward this project can be sent to:

**Macedonia World Baptist Missions**  
 PO Box 519  
 Braselton, GA 30517  
 (marked Tacna Christian School Fund)

*Thank you for your prayers and giving!*



**Love . . .** is the message of the valentine and the subject of interest on Valentine's Day. Love, however, in its truest quality context is not restricted to a card, box of candy, a bouquet of

flowers or a single day! The world's view of love is a stark contrast to love as viewed from a Scriptural perspective. Love has its origin in God. It is embodied in God for He is love. That love was extended to the world and expressed on Calvary when He gave His Son as a substitute for our sin. That wonderful truth is stated in perhaps the most quoted and memorized verse in the Bible, John 3:16. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* The songwriter wrote, "Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan!, Oh, the grace that brought it down to man! Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span, At Calvary" – Wm. R. Newell

It has been said that love is pure, painful, sweet, and dreadful — all at once. Our emotions of interest, affection, and strong personal feeling towards someone else is identified by one basic English word, yet this one word has more than one definition. Webster reminds us that love has multiple definitions. It may be a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties such as the maternal love for a child. It may be the affection and tenderness of the matrimonial love of husband and wife. It may be affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests such as the love towards friends or old classmates.

Love is spontaneous. We, for example, as Christians, love Him because He first loved us. His love is, in fact, shed abroad in our hearts. Married couples love one another, yet nurture their love mutually. I heard a story of a man who heard a sermon on love and got under conviction for not expressing more love and appreciation for his wife. He rushed home and burst into the kitchen with a speech of a belated gratitude to share with his wife. She stood shocked and stared at him in bewilderment and managed to say, "This is too much. This morning I broke my favorite plate, I've had a splitting headache all day, and now you've come home drunk!"

The child of God has been showered with the love of God and love towards the Saviour is kindled by the Holy Spirit who indwells the believer. That special love for Christ is supernatural and reassuring for it is a love that does not require the physical presence of the object of our love. Peter states it this way, *"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:"* – I Peter 1:8

I remember my childhood days and the exchanging of Valentine cards in Elementary School. I remember the message on the cards and the childish actions and reactions in reading the print, "Will you be my Valentine?" A young child would interpret the message as, "Will you be my special friend?"

I think of the Lord's provision at Calvary and am reminded of a deeper and precious truth. God's message of love is printed in bold type in the pages of Scripture and His saving grace to the sinner is available because of the Saviour's finished work at Calvary. He gives an invitation that results in far more than a friendship but rather a living and loving relationship that lasts forever! His gift is not in the form of candy wrapped in cellophane but rather *salvation wrapped in grace!*  
 . . . . . Chuck Peters



# A Bouquet of Thorns



Sandra felt as low as the heels of her shoes as she pushed against a February blast and the florist shop door. Her life had been easy, like a spring breeze. Then in the fourth month of her second pregnancy, a minor automobile accident stole her ease. During this very week she would have delivered a son. She grieved over her loss. As if that weren't enough, her husband's company threatened a transfer. Then her sister, whose annual visit she coveted, called saying she could not come. What's worse, Sandra's friend infuriated her by suggesting her grief was a God-given path to maturity that would allow her to empathize with others who suffer, that she should be thankful. "She has no idea what I'm feeling," thought Sandra with a shudder.

"Thankful? Thankful for what?" she wondered aloud. For a careless driver whose truck was hardly scratched when he rear-ended her? For an airbag that saved her life but took that of her child?

"Good afternoon, can I help you?" The shop clerk's approach startled her. "I...I need an arrangement," stammered Sandra.

"For Valentine's Day? Do you want beautiful but ordinary, or would you like to challenge the day with a customer favorite I call the Special?" asked the shop clerk. "I'm convinced that flowers tell stories," she continued. "Are you looking for something that conveys love and gratitude?"

"Not exactly!" Sandra blurted out. "In the last five months, everything that could go wrong has gone wrong." Sandra regretted her outburst, and was surprised when the shop clerk said, "I have the perfect arrangement for you."

Then the door's small bell rang, and the shop clerk said, "Hi, Barbara...let me get your order." She politely excused herself and walked toward a small workroom, then quickly reappeared, carrying an arrangement of greenery, bows, and long-stemmed thorny roses. Except the ends of the rose stems were neatly snipped... there were no flowers. "Want this in a box?" asked the clerk. Sandra watched for the customer's response. Was this a joke? Who would want rose stems with no flowers?! She waited for laughter, but neither woman laughed. "Yes, please," Barbara replied with an appreciative smile. "You'd think after three years of getting the special, I wouldn't be so moved by its significance, but I can feel it right here, all over again," she said as she gently tapped her chest.

"Uhh," stammered Sandra, "that lady just left with, uhh... she just left with no flowers!" "Right...I cut off the flowers. That's the Special... I call it the Thorns Bouquet. "Oh, come on, you can't tell me someone is willing to pay for that?" exclaimed Sandra.

"Barbara came into the shop three years ago feeling very much like you feel today," explained the clerk. "She thought she had very little to be thankful for. She had lost her father to cancer, the family business was failing, her son was into drugs, and she was facing major surgery."

"That same year I had lost my husband," continued the clerk, "and for the first time in my life, I had to spend the holidays alone. I had no children, no husband, no family nearby, and too great a debt to allow any travel.

"So what did you do?" asked Sandra. "I learned to be thankful for thorns,"



answered the clerk quietly. "I've always thanked God for good things in life and never thought to ask Him why those good things happened to me, but when bad stuff hit, did I ever ask! It took time for me to learn that dark times are important. I always enjoyed the 'flowers' of life, but it took thorns to show me the beauty of God's comfort. You know, the Bible says that God comforts us when we're afflicted, and from His consolation we learn to comfort others."

Sandra sucked in her breath as she thought about the very thing her friend had tried to tell her. "I guess the truth is I don't want comfort. I've lost a baby and I'm angry with God." Just then someone else walked in the shop.

"Hey, Phil!" shouted the clerk to the balding, rotund man. "My wife sent me in to get our usual Valentine's arrangement... twelve thorny, long-stemmed stems!" laughed Phil as the clerk handed him a tissue-wrapped arrangement from the refrigerator.

"Those are for your wife?" asked Sandra incredulously. "Do you mind me asking why she wants something that looks like that?"

"No.. I'm glad you asked," Phil replied. "Four years ago my wife and I nearly divorced. After forty years, we were in a real mess, but with the Lord's grace and guidance, we plowed through problem after problem. He rescued our marriage. Jenny here (the clerk) told me she kept a vase of rose stems to remind her of what she learned from "thorny" times, and that was good enough for me. I took home some of those stems. My wife and I decided to label each one for a specific "problem" and give thanks to Him for what that problem taught us."

As Phil paid the clerk, he said to Sandra, "I highly recommend the Special!" "I just don't know if I can be thankful for the thorns in my life." Sandra said to the clerk. "It's all too... fresh."

"Well," the clerk replied carefully, "my experience has shown me that thorns make roses more precious. We treasure God's providential care more during trouble than at any other time. Remember, it was a crown of thorns that Jesus wore so we might know His love. Don't resent the thorns."

Tears rolled down Sandra's cheeks. For the first time since the accident, she loosened her grip on resentment. "I'll take those twelve long-stemmed thorns, please," she managed to choke out.

"I hoped you would," said the clerk gently. "I'll have them ready in a minute."

"Thank you. What do I owe you?" asked Sandra. "Nothing," said the clerk. "Nothing but a promise to allow God to heal your heart. The first year's arrangement is always on me." The clerk smiled and handed a card to Sandra.

"I'll attach this card to your arrangement, but maybe you'd like to read it first." It read: "Dear God, I have never thanked you for my thorns. I have thanked you a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my thorns. Teach me the glory of the cross I bear; teach me the value of my thorns. Show me your love anew, and that I've climbed closer to you along the path of pain. Show me that, through my tears, the colors of your rainbow look much more brilliant."